

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
-----102113 291914Z /46  
R 291601Z AUG 77  
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8812

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 14322

EXDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS  
TAGS: MASS, EG, US  
SUBJECT: GAMASY'S LAMENT

1. IN MEETING WITH GAMASY TODAY, I FOUND HIM CORDIAL BUT DEPRESSED. HE WONDERED WHEN AN ARAB/ISRAELI PEASE WOULD REALLY BE ACHIEVED. THE PRESIDENT KEEPS ASSURING HIM THAT IT WILL BE BEFORE LONG, BUT HE COULD SEE NO SIGN OF ANY PROGRESS. THERE IS MUCH TALK, BUT NO MOVEMENT TAKES PLACE. IN HIS PERSONAL JUDGMENT, PEACE WILL NOT BE ACHIEVED UNTIL AT LEAST 1983, IF THEN. IN HIS VIEW, THERE WILL BE SERIOUS PROBLEM IN THE NEXT YEAR OR TWO.

2. I ASKED IF HE WAS ALLUDING TO THE LIKELIHOOD OF A NEW OUTBREAK OF ARAB-ISRAEL HOSTILITIES. HE SAID THAT HE DOUBTS THAT THIS WILL TAKE PLACE. ISRAEL, AS A RESULT OF MASSIVE USG ARMS SALES, BELIEVES IT CAN BEAT ALL OF THE ARAB ARMIES AND IS CORRECT IN THAT ESTIMATE. WITH THIS PREPONDERANT MILITARY STRENGTH, ISRAEL SEES NO NEED TO MOVE MEANINGFULLY ON PEACE FRONT. IN MEANTIME, EGYPTIAN MILITARY CAPABILITY IS BEING STEADILY DEGRADED. AS A RESULT OF GOE POLICY SHIFT, SOVIET SPARE PARTS ARE NO LONGER AVAILABLE. DIVERSIFICATION PROGRAM IS SLOW, SINCE EUROPEAN SUPPLIERS DO NOT HAVE MOST OF THE DESIRED ITEMS ON THE SHELF AS SUPERPOWERS DO. MOREOVER, WEALTHY ARAB STATES ARE NOT  
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PROVIDING PROMISED FUNDING FOR NEW ARMS AS QUICKLY AS IS NEEDED. FOR EXAMPLE, SAUDI ARABIA HAS NOT PROVIDED ANY FUNDS FOR THIS PURPOSE SINCE JANUARY. SAUDIS HAVE PROMISED FUNDS, BUT THEY ARE TERRIBLY SLOW IN COMING THROUGH.

3. GAMASY THEN ASKED RHETORICALLY WHY USG CONTINUES TO

PROVIDE ISRAEL WITH LARGE QUANTITIES OF NEW WEAPONS. ISRAEL ALREADY HAS MORE THAN IT NEEDS FOR ITS LEGITIMATE DEFENSE. IVEW WHICH FORMER SERETARY KISSINGER AND OTHERS HAD ADUMBRATED THAT SUCH ARMS SUPPLIES GIVE ISRAEL CONFIDENCE TO NEGOTIATE HAD SURELY BY NOW BEEN PROVEN ILLUSORY. IN GAMASY'S OPINION, THEY SIMPLY CONTRIBUTE TO ISRAELI INTRANSIGENCE. CONTINUING ARMS SUPPLIES TO ISRAEL, WITHOUT SOME QUID PRO QUO REQUIRING WITHDRAWAL FROM OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES, HE ARGUED, WILL ONLY FREEZE ME SITUATION AND ULTIMATELY LEAD TO NEW TENSIONS IN AREA.

4. I SOUGHT TO BUCK UP GAMASY A BIT BY REMINDING HIM OF USG'S DETERMINATION TO TRY TO MOVE PEACE EFFORT FORWARD. NO ONE EVER THOUGHT IT WOULD BE EASY, BUT HE SHOULD HAVE BEEN REASSURED BY SOME OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S RECENT STATEMENTS. GAMASY INTERJECTED THAT THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENTS HAD BEEN HEARTENING, BUT IN HIS DEPRESSED MOOD COMMENTED THAT SUCH STATEMENTS WILL NOT MOVE THE ISRAELIS. ONLY SOME KIND OF PRESSURE WILL CAUSE THEM TO DO SO. ON ARMS FOR ISRAEL, I TOLD HIM THAT, AS HE KNEW, WE ARE IN PART HONORING OUR COMMITMENT TO ISRAEL MADE AT THE TIME OF SINAI II. HE MIGHT NOT LIKE IT, BUT THIS WAS AN OBLIGATION THAT WE ARE HONOR BOUND TO FULFILL. AS HE DOUBTLESS KNEW, ALL NEW ARMS REQUESTS ARE BEING CAREFULLY VETTED BY THE NEW ADMINISTRATION, ALTHOUGH OUR COMMITMENT TO ISRAEL'S SECURITY REMAINS CONFIDENTIAL

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HIGH. IT MIGHT INDEED BE A DEBATABLE POINT WHETHER ARMS SALES TO ISRAEL CONTRIBUTE TO LATTER'S SENSE OF SECURITY AND WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE, BUT OUR JUDGMENT CONTINUES TO BE THAT THIS IS AN ESSENTIAL FACTOR IN THE EQUATION. IN ANY EVENT, WE REMAIN HOPEFUL THAT SOME PROGRESS WILL BE POSSIBLE IN THE MONTHS AHEAD AND ARE SPARING NO EFFORT TO MOVE IN THIS DIRECTION.

5. GAMASY SAID HE WISHED US WELL, BUT REMAINED DECIDEDLY PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THE FUTURE.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
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